A

PARADOX

Against

LIBERTY.

Written by the Lords,

During their Impriſonment

In the TOWER.

A POEM.

Contrahes Vento nimium ſecundo
Turgida Vela.

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A POEM.

A PARODOX Againſt Liberty.

A Priſon, or the Iſle, are much the ſame;
They onely differ in Conceit and Name.
As Art the firſt, Nature Immures the laſt;
Onely i'th' larger Mold her Figure's caſt.
All Iſlanders are in a Priſon pent,
And none at large, not thoſe o'th' Continent.
Each Mariner's a Priſoner in his Bark.
The living World was priſon'd in the Ark.
And though it be abroad adayes, the Light
Still lodges in the priſon of black Night.
The Sea it ſelf, is to its bounds confin'd;
And *Æolus* in Caves ſhuts up the wind.
Nothing in nature has ſuch vaſt Extent,
But is impriſon'd in its Element.
The Fiſh, in watry Dungeons are incloſ'd;
Men, Beaſts, and Birds, to Earth and Ayr diſpos'd.
If to enlarge their narrow bounds, they ſtrive,
The fatal freedome rarely they ſurvive.
And as with them, we hope with Us 'twill be,
When from their Priſons took, Death ſets them free.

Man can no more a native freedome boaſt ;
That Jewel ne're was found, ſince firſt 'twas loſt.
'Twas then tranſported to the *Stygian* Coaſt.
But ſtill there's ſomething which we do eſteem,
Onely becauſe 'tis like the poliſht Gemme,
And this we Freedome call ; its credit grows
From a falſe ſtamp, the guilded outſide ſhows ;
Which avaritious Man attempts to get,
Cheated and ruin'd with the Counterfeit.
Like Children, Soapy-bubbles they purſue,
And the fantaſtick Viſion, take for true ;
But whilſt they think bright forms they do embrace,
Ixion-like, they find a cloud i'th' place.
Conſent of Crowds, exceeding credit brings,
And ſeems to ſtamp Truth's Image on falſe things.
Not what's a real good, but what does ſeem ;
Still ſhares the blind and popular eſteem.
Whilſt Senſe and Fancy over-rule their choice,
And Reaſon in th' Election has no voice.
But Souls in vain have Reaſon's Attribute,
If to their Rule, they cannot Senſe ſubmit.
Hence the Heroick mind makes no complaint,
But freedom does enjoy, even in reſtraint.
When Chains and Fetters do his Body bind,
He then appears more free, and leſs confin'd.
Diſcord and Care, which do diſtract him here,
In durance take their leave, and come not there.

Falſe

False Friends and Flatt'rers, then, take last adieu,
Who often swore how faithful and how true;
Things their dishoneſt bosoms never knew.
These, like the Swallows, in cold weather flye;
A Summers fortune onely draws them nigh.
Flatt'rers a sort of fatal Suckers be,
Which draw the Sap 'till they destroy the Tree.
Fair Vertue to their Opticks when they bring,
Seems a deform'd and antiquated thing.
Vice they commend, whilst Vertue is despis'd;
The blackest by these Negroes most are pris'd.
These slaves to Vice, do hug so hard and long,
Till like the o'refond Ape, they kill their Young.
Ambition in the Mind's a Fevrish Thirst,
Which is by drinking, dryer than at first;
And these will feed the humour till it burst.
When Parasites the Arbiters are made,
They'l place the Garland on a Bedlam's head.
Riot, Excess, and Pleasure car' the Day,
And Lust (the worst of Tyrants) bears the sway,
At whose black Throne they blind Allegiance pay.
Morose and dull they do account the Grave;
And the Meek-man, fit only for a Slave:
The Humble, of a Nature poor and base;
The Chast, sprung from a dull insipid Race;
And Temperance, a Gallant's chief disgrace.
In Vertues garb, the great Mans Vice they dress,
Giving it Names which sound of Worthiness.

They call his Pride the Grandeur of his Minde,
And for his Luſt the Name they have deſign'd
Is a complaiſant Ayr, that makes men kinde.
Profaneſs is his Wit; and his Exceſs
By a Gay janty Humor they expreſs;
All his Debauches too muſt be no leſs.
Thus they lap ruine up, and guild our Crimes;
But Vice deſtroys, like *Ivy*, where it climbs.
In us, the dang'rous ſtate th'Ambitious ſee
Of Greatneſs, Avarice, and Flatterie.
Gifts, Honours, Office, Greatneſs, Grace of Kings,
Raiſe the Ambitious upon treach'rous wings;
'Till from the mighty heights they giddy grow,
And fall into the Ruine lyes below.
If the firſt fail, which do ſupport our ſtate,
The laſt our Fall ſerve to precipitate.
This with too dear Experience we have bought,
And learnt a Leſſon, which too late was taught.
Proſperity's a Drug, that muſt be ta'ne
Corrected, (*Opium*-like) or elſe 'tis bane.
A more *Lethargick* quality's in her,
Than ever yet in *Opium* did appear.
Her fatal Poyſon to the Minde ſhe ſends,
And uncorrect, in ſure deſtruction ends.
Whilſt in the way her guilded ſnares ſhe lays,
Eaſie and credulous Man ſhe ſoon betrays;
Who ſees her Roſes and her Lilies here,
But her concealed Snakes doth never fear.

Proſpe-

Prosperity's repasts puff up the Mind
With unsubstantial and unwholsome wind.
'Tis a *Hault-Gouſt* which *Epicures* do use,
And choicer Viands squeamishly refuse.
But when Affliction moulds your dayly bread,
'Tis then the staff of Life with which she's fed.
Affliction (like the river *Nile*) bestows
Her fruitful blessings wherefoe'er she flows:
And if when she withdraws, strange Serpents rise,
Not in her streams, but in the Soyl, it lyes.
Which (like the great *Apollo*) she strikes dead,
By the same Influence they first were bred,
If she return, and shew her hidden head.
Great Minds (like the victorious Palms) are wont
Under the Weights of Fortune more to mount.
Strongly suppreſt, and hurl'd upon the ground,
Fill'd with sublimer thoughts they more rebound.
Still careleſs whether Fortune smile or frown,
Whether she give, or take away a Crown.
Our Walls are Tyded, and by that we know
She always ebbs, when she doth leave to flow,
And constant in Inconstancy does grow.
Make an attacque all Injuries that can,
They fall like Waves beneath a rising Swan.
Freed and secur'd from all discordant Care,
Here we our heads above the billows bear,
Till from our shoulders they transplanted are.

And from their ſummits, with dumb gapes proclaim,
Of a Quincumvirat the trait'rous ſhame.
But during all this Storm, we ſtill do find
An Anchor and a Haven in our Mind,
Not beaten now, though then expos'd to th' Wind.
As Nightingals, our boſoms we expoſe,
And ſing, environ'd with the ſharpeſt woes.
Degraded from vain Honour, here we grow
More great and high, as Trees by lopping do.
Honour's like froth in each Man's glaſs of Beer;
'Tis leaſt of uſe, though topmoſt it appear.
The common Vouchee for ill acts ſhe's grown;
It and Religion all our Miſchiefs own.
She raigns in Youth with an unruly heat,
And in her falſer Mirror ſhews them Great,
Till Age and Time convince them of the Cheat.
Raſh heads approve what ſober Men deſpiſe,
And the fantaſtick Garb offends the Wiſe;
She rarely now is ſeen, but in Diſguiſe.
True Honour and plain Honeſty's the ſame;
From various Dwellings, comes the various Name:
For whilſt ſhe's gay in Courts, ſhe's Honour there,
But Honeſty with us in Durance here.
In differing States, moſt things have difference:
What pleas'd this day, the next offends the Prince.
The Proſperous loath what the Afflicted love;
Priſoners abhor, what free, they did approve.

And

And ſtill there's power in each Man's choice, to make
Himſelf content, if he can wiſely take,
And think his own (though hard) a happy Stake.
In ev'ry ſtate does ſome Contentment dwell,
And here we find a Palace in a Cell.
Good is good ev'ry where, and ev'ry thing,
And Good can of it ſelf no Evil bring.
All Good's a raye of the firſt Light alone;
When Ill approaches, onely that's our own.
Vertue's not gain'd by ſpending of our days
In pleaſure, Princes Courts, or from their Rays.
At Vertue's Coaſt by Travel we arrive,
And ſo by Travel Vertue's kept alive.
She dwindles if ſhe want due Exerciſe;
But us'd, grows brighter, and ſtill multiplies.
Vertue increaſes, Snow-ball-like, rowl'd on:
A lazy Vertue's next of kin to None.
Pris'ners indeed they be, that do lay by
At once their Freedom and their Induſtry.
If Men turn Drones within theſe hony'd Hyves,
It lyes i'th' Pris'ner's heart, and not his Gyves.
The Good grow better here, the Bad grow worſe;
The Spur that makes this go, does jade that Horſe.
Hence the great'ſt part are male-content and ſad,
Since that the Good are fewer than the Bad.
A Bliſs that ſprings from penitential joy,
Is the Minds balſome in each ſharp Annoy;
Fools onely their own Comforts do deſtroy.

To this Retirement we can freely go;
'Tis the great'ſt pace of Majeſty below:
Our ſtirring out imports the World to know.
The Goaler's Centinel to guard our Doors,
And Caſtles are contain'd i'th' narrow Floors.
More happy and more ſafe, ſecur'd from Foes,
Than thoſe whom Troops of Enemies encloſe.
Much more as Priſ'ners, our high bliſs we boaſt,
Being ſecur'd from ſuch a mighty Hoaſt
Of deadly Foes, ſo fierce with wrath and might,
Our ſelves ſo feeble, and unfit to fight.
'Gainſt the black band of Vicious and Profane,
Who Thouſands do undo in each Campain.
In the Aſſault, we ſeldome brook the Field,
But flye like Hares, or elſe like Cowards yield.
Yet this the World eſteems an hard eſtate,
And Us, who feel it, count unfortunate.
Shew then, Philoſophy! the ſtate wherein
Such Safety, and ſo much Content is ſeen.
Wherein leſs rugged or ſteep hind'rance lyes,
T'obſtruct the Path unto Perfection's prize.
The uſeful Rod's only bound up for this,
To whip and laſh the Childiſh on to Bliſs;
Who ſullenly refuſe the Rod to kiſs,
And ſo the Bleſſing in the Whipping miſs.
Some, like the Whale, only deſign'd to play
In fruitleſs pleaſures, drive the flying day;
As Boys with Clackers drive the Lent away.

Whilſt

Whilſt here, we ſtop the hours of Time, that flyes,
With Contemplation's nobler Exerciſe.
Maugre all Goals, think we e're long muſt dye,
And then enjoy an endleſs Liberty;
Death will redeem from long Captivity.
Man's Life's a Piece ſpun of a various Thred;
In ſome 'tis fine, in ſome a courſer Web.
The Threds acroſs, th' Occurrences of Fate,
Cut early from the Loom by Death, or late.
The Dread of Kings, Death, does not us diſmay;
To Dye's leſs, than be Tantaliz'd each day.
What Man complains, with Wearineſs oppreſt,
That Night is come, the only Time to Reſt?

FINIS.